

Governor Carney Signs Universal Indoor Mask Mandate

Public mask mandate takes effect at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday

School mask requirement also extended

Additional members of the Delaware National Guard deployed to assist with non-clinical operations inside Delaware hospitals

WILMINGTON, Del. – Governor John Carney on Monday signed a [revision](#) to the [State of Emergency declaration](#), requiring Delawareans to wear masks in indoor public settings, including convenience stores, grocery stores, gyms, restaurants, bars, hair salons, malls, and casinos.

The mask requirement takes effect at 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, January 11. Also on Monday, Governor Carney announced plans to extend the school and child care facilities mask requirements, and deployed additional members of the Delaware National Guard to assist with non-clinical operations inside Delaware hospitals.

[Click here to read Monday's revision to the State of Emergency.](#)

[Click here to read the full State of Emergency declaration.](#)

“Our hospital systems are facing a crisis-level situation with record numbers of Delawareans seeking emergency care. We need all Delawareans in the fight as we face this winter

*surge of COVID-19 to make sure our hospitals are not overrun,” said **Governor Carney**. “I know we’re all exhausted by this pandemic. But at the level of hospitalizations we’re seeing, Delawareans who need emergency care might not be able to get it. That’s just a fact. It’s time for everyone to pitch in and do what works. Wear your mask indoors. Avoid gatherings or expect to get and spread COVID. Get your vaccine and, if eligible, get boosted. That’s how we’ll get through this surge without endangering more lives.”*

Governor Carney on Monday announced that the mask requirements in K-12 public and private schools and child care facilities, which had been set to expire in early February, will be extended. The extension will ensure that Delaware students can attend school in-person without consistent disruptions.

Monday’s revision to the State of Emergency also eases State regulations to allow and incentivize recently-retired educators to return to the classroom as substitute teachers in an effort to keep children in school.

Both the public and school mask requirements apply to anyone kindergarten age and older. Children aged 2-5 are strongly encouraged to wear masks in public indoor settings, including schools and child care facilities. Children under 2-years-old should not wear masks due to the risk of suffocation.

Masks are not required outdoors or while eating or drinking in restaurants and bars, but otherwise should be worn. Churches and other houses of worship are exempted from the mask requirement.

Businesses responsible for indoor settings open to the public are encouraged to provide disposable masks to customers who don’t have them – and to post signage about the indoor mask requirement.

[Click here](#) for a downloadable sign for businesses. Additional signs will be available [here](#).

Also on Monday, Governor Carney deployed 70 additional members of the Delaware National Guard to assist with non-clinical operations inside Delaware hospitals statewide, beginning Tuesday.

In total, more than 300 members of the Delaware National Guard are assisting with COVID-19 response efforts – including support at vaccination and testing locations, help with PPE distribution, and hospital assistance. Roughly 110 members of the Guard – separate from the 70 members deployed on Monday – are training to serve as certified nursing assistants in health care settings statewide to take pressure off hospital systems.

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